Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malawi and Sri Lanka.

During the aforesaid meeting a draft constitution of the proposed Association, its structure, funding and location of the Secretariat etc. were discussed in detail and it was agreed that the participating countries would forward their observations on the draft documents circulated by the Sri Lankan authorities to the Tea Board of Sri Lanka.

Apart from the discussions on the draft document of the constitution of Association other issues discussed during the meeting were as follows:—

(a) Review of situation arising out of decline in tea prices.

(b) Generic promotion of tea in the overseas markets.

(c) Possible areas of technical cooperation amongst tea producing countries.

(d) Threat to natural tea from artificial substitute products.

(c) Inter-Governmental cooperation in tea research.

Conditions of female agricultural workers

2093. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the female agricultural workers in the country are the most exploited lot without equal remuneration and working conditions and without medical and maternity facilities; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to improve the lot of female agricultural workers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) and (b) In order to secure reasonable working conditions for women workers and to prevent their exploitation, several laws have been enacted by the Parliament. The protective legal provisions under different laws include provision of creche for the benefit of women workers, time off for feeding children during working hours, separate toilets and washing facilities near workplace, provision of maternity leave etc. In order to prevent economic exploitation of women workers, the Government has also enacted the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 which provides for non-discrimination in the matters relating to payment of wage and other service conditions. Under the Act, the officers notified as Inspectors make inspections and prosecute those found violating the provisions of the Act. The Central Government monitors the implementation of the Act.

Meeting of central provident fund trust

2094. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) how many times the Central Provident Fund Trust met during the last three years;

(b) the details of each meeting;

(c) what decisions were taken on the agenda;

(d) how many times did the trust meet outside Delhi to review the functioning of the trust;

(e) how many regional offices and subordinates offices were visited by Members of the trust and also the shortcomings found in the functioning of each office; and

(f) how many complaints have been received by the head-quarters, year-wise details during the last three years and action taken and how many complaints arc pending for final disposal?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI G. VENKATSWAMY): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

Setting up of Joint Business Commission between India and Iran

2095. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Iran have agreed to set up a Joint Business Commission to provide a forum for exchange of business information and increased interaction between business representatives of the two countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) There is no agreement between India and Iran for a "Joint Business Commission". However, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed an agreement in 1982 to establish a Joint Business Council (JBC). No meeting of the JBC has been held so far.

Central investment in Gujarat

2096. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decrease has been observed in the Central Investment in Gujarat during 1993-94 as compared to 1992-93;

(b) if so, the reasons, therefor;

(c) what has been the proportion of Central Investment in the State during the last three years; and

(d) what remedial steps are proposed to be taken by Government to enhance Central Investment in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAVA): (a) to (c) The Central Investment is made for the country as a whole keeping the national priorities in view. It is neither planned nor accounted State-wise.

(d) Keeping in view the priorities laid down for the Eighth Plan, the proposal of Government of Gujarat in this regard, as and when received will be considered on merits and the priorities of the State.

Warehouses in Punjab

2097. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of warehouses under the Central Warehousing Corporation in the State of Punjab; and

(b) the details thereof with their total capacity district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) District-wise warehouses of CWC in the state of Punjab as on 30.9.95 alongwith figures of total storage capacity